

Education and Workforce Development Cabinet Governor proclaims June Helen Keller Deaf-Blind Awareness Month

Press Release Date: Friday, June 20, 2014

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Spotlights federal program providing free communications equipment for those eligible

FRANKFORT, Ky. (June 20, 2014) – Governor Steve Beshear today proclaimed June 2014 as Helen Keller Deaf-Blind Awareness Month. The proclamation commemorates the birth of deaf-blind activist Helen Keller, promotes the rights of people who are deaf-blind and calls attention to the federal program, iCanConnect, as a civic way to increase opportunities for all.

The National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program (NDBEDP), which is promoted as iCanConnect, provides free communications technology to people with hearing and vision loss, enabling them to remain connected with family, friends and their communities.

The program authorizes the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to provide local distribution of a wide array of accessible communications technology at no cost to people who qualify.

Thousands of Americans are currently estimated to have some combination of hearing and vision loss. Many, particularly elderly people, may not be aware their loss of hearing and sight may qualify them to receive iPads, amplified telephones, computer screen readers, or other accessible communications technology for free.

“With the right technology, people with disabilities can link to information and ideas, be productive, and move ahead,” said Allison Flanagan, executive director of Kentucky’s Office for the Blind. “Helen Keller, whose remarkable life we honor this month, exemplified the potential of a person who is deaf-blind. We are proud to promote iCanConnect as a truly transformational program.”

For more information about the National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program, and to see if you or someone you know qualifies, visit www.iCanConnect.org or call 1-800-825-4595.

The Office for the Blind, an agency of the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet’s Department of Workforce Investment, assists Kentuckians with disabilities to achieve

gainful employment and independence. For more information about services, call the office toll free at 1-800-321-6668 or visit the OFB website at <http://www.blind.ky.gov>.

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